



The Economics of Living at Ft. Larned

Economics

B. 1, Ind. 1

B. 2, Ind. 4

B. 5, Ind. 2

Literature

B.2, Ind. 3

History

1. Remind students that people from all time period have to make decisions concerning both behavior and money and Fort Larned solders were no exception.

2. Put up the following terms and definitions on the board or overhead and have students write them down:

Scarcity - when supply of an item is less than the demand

Incentives - something, such as fear of punishment or the expectation of reward which induces action or motivates effort - can be negative or positive

Opportunity cost - in making a decision, the most valuable alternative not chosen

As a group, brainstorm a real world example for each term. Have students think about their own recent experiences to make these concepts more concrete and less abstract.

3. Have student re-read the section, “ What was it like to be stationed at Ft. Larned?” from the Read Kansas card. Remind them that the military is an organization that prides itself on maintaining discipline. Based on the text, have students find as many examples of positive and negative incentives used to keep Fort Larned solders in line. If time permits, compare the incentives used on Fort Larned solders with those used in their school to keep students behaved.



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4. Distribute pages 52-54 from *Fort Larned Adventures* to students and let them pick a person who they will role-play for this activity. Ideally, don't let any students in the same class pick the same person to role play. Because the vast majority of the people at Fort Larned were males, have boys pick a male to role play and give girls the option of portraying a male or female (adult). Explain the codes on the census information, so students know who they are choosing.

5. After students have committed to a person, distribute pgs 47, 49, and 59 to students as well as the Ft Larned Role Play worksheet (attached).

A. First have them determine what their monthly pay would be based on information given on salaries of both soldiers and civilians.

B. Remind girls who are housewives (usually the officers' wives) that they had no salary of their own, but would depend on their husband's salary.

C. Laundresses who were married had a monthly income of their salary and their husband's combined.

D. Point out that employment opportunities for women were sometimes greater at frontier military posts than they would have been in the East or in civilian communities.

- 1) Laundresses worked hard but also could make good money
- 2) A laundress and sergeant's combined income (both earned about \$40 a month) could be more than lieutenant's (\$70 per month).



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6. Read the section titled “ Few Dollars”on pg 59, then have the students subtract all of the items listed as pay deductions from their charater’s pay to determine what you would have to spend every month.

7. Have students look at the list of Sutler’s prices on pg. 47. Explain that a sutler was a storekeeper who was allowed to operate a store on fort property at which all people - both soldiers and civilians - could shop.

8. Have students fill out the worksheet based on the character they chose.

9. If time allows, discuss how rank social status, gender etc. determined the type and difficulty of the economic decisions people at Fort Larned had to make.